

Using Video and Natural Materials

Charles AHRENS*

Key Words: notional—functional; grammar—translation;
natural materials; survey questionnaire trends

Introduction

This paper is divided into two halves, four parts in the first, one part in the second, and sets for itself these tasks: (1), to explain some difficulties teaching foreign language at a Japanese national university; (2) to briefly discuss two current foreign—language teaching methods; (3), to briefly discuss some of the underlying theoretical assumptions and practical applications of a third current language—teaching methodology published in a text by the authors Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell, titled The Natural Approach; (4) to see how such an applied theory alters the traditional role of the teacher and how it fits into a language curriculum, and in so doing how it attempts to solve the problems mentioned in part one; and (5), in the second half to discuss certain trends yielded in survey questionnaires given to 184 Nagaoka University of Technology and 105 Niigata University students which reflect upon both the methodology of the natural approach and the means of instruction, video.

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*Language Center, Nagaoka University of Technology

Part One

1. Structural Difficulties Impeding Foreign Language Teaching

The largest obstacle to successful foreign language teaching at Japanese national universities— and which causes almost all other problems — comes from the curricular structural impediment which limits teaching a class to once a week for ninety minutes: one 90-minute class per week per class is the norm, and simply stated, it does not allow for the necessary interaction among the teacher, the students, or the content of the class. In fact, whereas classes are supposed to meet 15 times per term in the academic calendar, this rarely occurs, given the number of national holidays and school festivities. (Perhaps this problem of a lack of adequate number of classes has precipitated many universities to establish their own intensive language courses, if not their own separate Foreign Language departments). Moreover, “regular” attendance is not required: at Nagaoka, a student can be absent roughly 25% of the classes without failing, while at Niigata it is 30%. In addition, when a student misses one class, he or she actually is missing more than one, since the student doesn’t usually check homework given the previous week, and comes to class not knowing what the homework is for the current week. (Even though it is strongly encouraged, it is a rare occurrence for a student to contact another classmate or come to the office in order to review homework or ask for homework assignments. This seems to be a common phenomenon which I have observed on three continents among American, Spanish, Yugoslav as well as Japanese students)

As a result of teaching within the current structure certain other problems are generated, namely, firstly, deciding the most appropriate methodology and choosing a text, and secondly, the unsettling psychological effect due to lack of contact.

2. Two Popular Teaching Methodologies and Attendant Problems

Many teachers choose either to use a nominally “notional—functional” syllabus, or a grammar—translation reading syllabus and text.

In the notional—functional text, the idea is to teach the various language functions for a given situation or place, and there are a plethora of texts published in Japan (it might be deemed a ‘growth’ industry!) with units covering mostly the same things: personal introductions, interaction at different venues (bus stations, airport terminals, banks, restaurants, hotels, shopping malls, ad infinitum). These texts may be described loosely as “notional—functional”, and use mainly dialogues.

Some problems of using such texts are firstly, that the teacher cannot possibly cover all the necessary material in only fifteen class meetings: he or she might only finish a few units of an entire text, and secondly, although teachers use different texts, the content is pretty much all the same, so there is a duplication, even a reduplication of material. Moreover, such texts are aimed mostly at oral language production, having the student reproduce the language functions of short conversations.

Presuming the content of many texts to be notional—functional dialogues with the aim of oral production, we can ask, “do our students really need to know how to purchase a bus ticket from New York City to Miami?” We also can ask just how much of these conversational skills are actually retained. Unless a teacher “recycles” dialogue material in the classroom, perhaps students can only half—remember the language functions of various situations. Furthermore, teaching conversational skills can be beneficial but it is difficult to “test” or check simply because these language functions are best put to the test in a foreign country, and not a classroom.

Although English is the world's *lingua franca* and foreign travel is very popular among our students (Japan has allowed unrestricted travel since around 1965), should so much of a curriculum be focused on oral language simply because it is has been statistically proven that Japanese students find speaking the most difficult of the English—language arts skills? It is quite natural that students in an EFL, as opposed to an ESL setting often lack conversational skills: however, we should recognize the point, and perhaps not panic to the point of drastically revising curriculum.

The use of short stories is quite popular among many teachers. While short stories presumably have narrative structures which include a beginning and a conclusion, it is unclear how the short story is used: perhaps it is used holistically to convey meaning in the actions of characters in a story; perhaps it is used primarily in a strict line-by-line translation from foreign language to target language.

Some may have had the experience that using short stories for their holistic literary value with any except the brightest of foreign students is highly problematic in the sense that the very features which make literature invaluable to a culture are extra-linguistic and very difficult for even many native-speakers to grasp. If the students are very advanced then teaching literature is extremely rewarding. However, in many cases teachers feel the need to help their students by “watering down” short stories, making the language simpler, but this kind of editing changes the value of teaching literature in a way that it possibly should not be changed.

Finally, partially finishing a satisfactory number of units in a text and the endless duplication of content have the unsettling psychological effect of not really accomplishing much. There is no sense of “closure”. The word “closure” implies a sense of beginning and continuing something until there is a clearly-felt ending. After a 15-week term,

often the case is that the teacher has simply given bits or slices of information which seem unconnected.

3. Very Briefly: Krashen & Terrell's The Natural Approach

Why refer to ideas first published in a book in 1983, since in the maddeningly hectic world of social scientific publishing 1983 ideas might just as well be 1883? Well, in the same way that some people prefer plain old vanilla ice cream to the more exotic “designer” flavors, there is nothing wrong with a theory if what it said in the past is still “relevant” in the present. Many critics of Krashen and Terrell's The Natural Approach find it is based too much on common sense, that the ideas are so simple to anyone that they are obvious and need not be dressed and presented as “theory”. Therefore perhaps a little indulgence is necessary for some when reading over the following.

Some salient features of The Natural Approach which inform my design for the video class are found in the section titled “An Overview: Theory and Natural Approach”, and are listed below:

1. Acquisition is “.....developing ability in a language by using it in natural communicative situations.” (pg.18)
2. Learning is “knowing the rules.” (pg.18)
3. In studying a second language, acquisition is more important than learning.
4. “Comprehension precedes production” means that a student must understand a message before any other language skill, i.e. speaking or writing can take place:

Thus, the starting point in language instruction is to help acquirers

understand what is being said to them. Some of the implications of this principle are that (1) the instructor always uses the target language, (2) the focus of the communication will be a topic of interest for the student...(pg.20)

5. "A lowering of the affective filter". The affective filter is whatever gets in the way of acquiring language, for example, too much anxiety.

It is acknowledged that the above is brief and therefore, greatly reduces Krashen and Terrell's theories.

4 . The videos and Related Materials

Three different kinds of videos were used as a "visual text", nature videos, science videos, and Japanese cultural videos. The two nature videos are titled, "African Wildlife" and "The Rain Forest." The science videos, are titled "The Incredible Human Machine," "The Invisible World", and "The Computer Chip". The three cultural videos about Japan are titled, "Japanese Daily Beliefs and Customs", "Tokyo and the Country", and "The Japanese Businessman".

In addition to the videos, a written "cloze" transcript of the video, a vocabulary list, or dictionary, a vocabulary worksheet (see samples in Appendix 1-3)., and a recorded copy of the transcript were made and distributed to the students.

5 . A Rationaie for Using Videos and Related Natural Materials

Everyone watches T.V. and movies, and there is no need to labor the point. The widespread use of electronic multi-media is already an established fact; in fact, many of the conversation texts have accompanying videos. Research and other "how to" uses of video in

the class is also becoming established and in a 1994 publication the Japanese Association of Language Teachers (JALT) announced a new publication dedicated exclusively to video-related issues; similarly, one of the most popular on-going “special interests” sections of a TESOL publication focuses on video-related issues.

One reason to use video and a complimentary transcript is that it connects the weekly classes thematically and therefore the linguistic and more importantly extra-linguistic features of the text and video are more comprehensively understood. For example, the nature video “African Wildlife” tells the story of how the cyclical herd migrations in Namibia are caused by weather conditions. It is easy for students or anyone else to connect with such material because we can use our experience of the world.

One of the features of Krashen and Terrell is the aforementioned theory that comprehension precedes production (page 20). He believes that oral production will come in due time, that when it comes errors are O.K. Therefore, in a video class using natural materials much of the class time is given to listening to the tapes, to comprehending the overall meaning of text: in fact, the cloze is really more important to sharpen listening skills for the purpose of comprehensive understanding than it is as a means to “test” listening for a discrete word. If a student doesn’t catch all the words—it’s too difficult!—it really doesn’t matter.

So the use of video allows for tapping the students’ own experience while not forcing oral production. It also partially solves the problem of too few classes simply because the material is thematically connected from week to week.

6 . The Role of the Teacher and Students in a Natural Materials Classroom

From years and years of “traditional” instruction, students are so geared to beholding the instructor as the repository of all knowledge, themselves as empty or semi—empty vessels to be filled, that it is very difficult to change perceptions of the assigned roles of teacher and student, which is another way of saying that it is difficult to evenly redistribute the responsibility for what transpires in a classroom. The result is a passivity, a comfortable nemesis which often acts as a sort of glue between instructor and students. Using natural materials helps realign this imbalance: the teacher becomes a facilitator helping students to understand what they do not know. This is a very simple reduction of the Socratic method which translates into a teacher entering the class and the students asking for clarification of things they haven’t clearly understood. In the process of clarifying the teacher uses a “caretaker” speech, or “teacher” talk which Krashen defines as being “motivated by the caretaker’s desire to be understood.” In practical terms this means re—stating something by means of reducing the language difficulty or by synonymous phrasing, or by slowing the rate of delivery. It is speech which “modifies language in order to communicate, not in order to teach language.”

Using the video materials, students were advised that initially their comprehension rate might be minimal, but that with each successive listening, and after checking for comprehension among other students, their comprehension would increase: therefore, they were told it was “alright” if at first comprehension came slowly. Moreover, overall comprehension was encouraged at the expense of discrete—item correctness. The teacher also “pre—tests” the tests before the first exam so that the format is familiar to the students. So, a big responsibility of the teacher is to relax the students, as Krashen puts

it to lower “the affective filter”. In fact in all classes classical or jazz music was played at some point, either when students entered or left the classroom, or during conversation practice, for the purpose of attempting to create the most positive classroom atmosphere as possible.

Another important task is how to teach grammar: when questions about grammar came from a student, a choice was made based on whether an explanation might benefit the entire class, and if so, was explained there and then, or, if that was not the case, the student received an explanation from the teacher after class.” Just as a particular affective acquisition activity, for example, may entail the use of certain grammatical structures, the activity is not designed to “teach” that structure (Krashen, 157)

In conclusion, as much as possible the attempt was made to remove myself from the uncomfortable position between the students and the content.

7. Adapting the Videos

The natural speech in these videos was pre-tested and found to be far too difficult for the students. (1995 Pre-TOEFL scores of 100 Nagaoka University of Technology engineering students show a mean of 365; similar scores of Niigata University students are unknown). Finding appropriate texts which are not too complex is a salient problem in choosing natural materials. “Complexity” can have three sources: vocabulary, syntax, and semantics (Krashen pg.132). As a result, I edited and re-wrote a version which reduced a few complex syntactic structures to simpler forms and, more importantly, substituted vocabulary not solely because of their difficulty but because they were unnecessarily obscure or impractical in the sense that a student would rarely if ever use them. “Too many unfamiliar words in

a passage can render it incomprehensible” (Krashen pg.132). While it is difficult to determine the difficulty of any text, by using Pre-TOEFL scores and five years experience teaching similar students, adapting and using synonymous phrasing happens when it feels necessary. It is content more than syntactic complexity which seems to interfere with comprehension: “If we can identify content words and if we use our knowledge of the real world, we can make fairly successful guesses about what we read without always paying attention to syntax.” (Evelyn Hatch cited in Krashen, pg.133)

The recorded version of the transcript also was adapted. After listening to many videos (often recorded by the voices of the famous), I recorded it emulating the “video narrator’s rate of delivery: neither too fast nor too slow.

8 . A Description of Class—work, Homework, and Testing

A. In—class Listening, Watching, and Filling—in the Cloze

The cloze transcriptions of the videos vary in length. The nature and science video transcripts are about 8–10 pages, and the Japanese cultural videos somewhat shorter, from 6–8 pages. These transcripts were divided into three or four sections. So the students brought their cloze transcripts to class and while they listened to the recording and / or watched the video, they wrote in the missing words. A sort of pattern developed: the students would listen and watch two or three times, all the while writing, and then would check for comprehension in either pairs or small groups.

B . Conversation Practice

Given the fact that most Japanese students have little access to practicing conversation skills, it is not surprising that conversation is

very difficult for most students. (Perhaps this is what has caused various universities across Japan to shift the curricula focus to oral communication). Some of the Japanese cultural videos did generate short conversational topics because they include situations very similar to the students' own backgrounds, for example, "do your parents expect you to take care of them?", or "where does your family gather for 'obon'?" . Using nature or science videos did not lend itself so readily to natural conversations because the vocabulary needed to sustain even the briefest of conversations is often more passively retained than actively produced. As a result, some speaking activities about stating preferences or asking for and giving personal information were brought in as extraneous material (see Appendix 4). As will be discussed later, the students liked and wanted even more conversation.

C. Listening Homework

For listening homework, the students were advised to listen to their copies of the transcript.

D. Writing Homework

Writing assignments begun in class, often as a natural outgrowth to a speaking activity and were assigned as homework. They were generated from the videos: for example, students had to write about topics such as endangered species, deforestation and the greenhouse effect, the migration patterns of animal species, the most fascinating human organ system, the advantages and disadvantages of living in the country versus Tokyo. Unlike speaking, writing naturally allows students necessary time to monitor their ideas.

E. Vocabulary Homework

The use of natural materials means unedited text so for homework

students had to study vocabulary by reading and re-reading the text. Some vocabulary-building exercises were included, for example studying morphological affixation and compounding because students liked to see the flexibility of language. Students also completed vocabulary exercises which were aimed only at reinforcing the same lexical items found in the transcript: “.....we acquire morphology and syntax because we understand meaning. (Krashen p.155)

F. Language Lab Homework

At Nagaoka University of Technology, students were encouraged to visit the language and video lab where they could view a copy of the video and / or listen to a copy of the transcript.

G. Tests

Tests were given after each section of a transcript was completed. The tests were divided into five parts incorporating four skills or components: listening, writing, a grammar exercise (question formation), and reading comprehension using both “true” and “false” and short written responses, and vocabulary. (See Appendix 5) These tests were designed to evaluate both linguistic and communicative competence. For example, part one measures a student’s ability to hear and transcribe utterances, and part three focuses on question-formation, so both focus on linguistic competence. On the other hand, parts two, four and five focus on communicative competence. Part two requires the student to describe in writing a video scene using as much information as possible (who, what, where when, why, how much, etc.). “True” and “false”, short-answer writing, and using vocabulary are also means of testing communicative competence. Therefore, while the content of the course is natural materials, the study and testing of grammar is not altogether abandoned, but merely relegated to a lesser role. Moreover, it is well-known that every

student does not learn best nor quickest by the same method, for example listening to a text and filling in a cloze, so some students feel more comfortable studying grammar.

Part Two

9. A Description of the Students Participating in the Survey

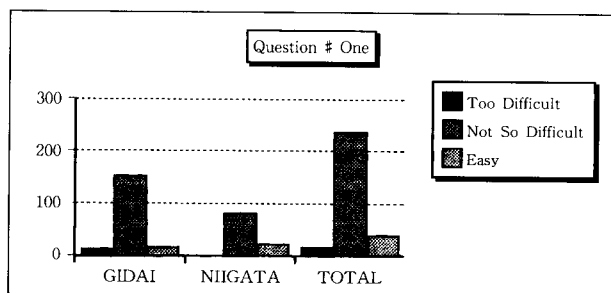
A total of 184 students from Nagaoka University of Technology were surveyed in 1995, 36 first-year students from various engineering faculties, 97 second-year students, also from various engineering faculties, and 51 third-year civil engineering students. The 105 first-year students from Niigata University were from the faculties of law, dentistry, and medicine, were surveyed over two years, 56 in 1995 and 48 in 1996.

The total number of students was 289. The trends yielded by the six survey questions are discussed below (see Appendix 6).

10. Question # One: "What is your opinion of the level of the material?"

Figure 1

	A	B	C	D
1		Too Difficult	Not So Difficult	Easy
2	GIDAI	14	153	17
3	NIIGATA	1	82	22
4	TOTAL	15	235	39

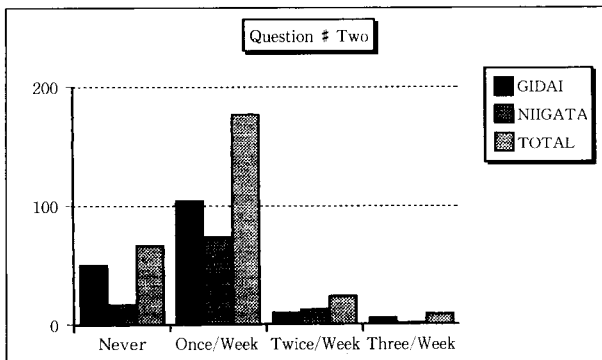


The figures represented above in Figure 1 indicate that of the 289 respondents to question # one, 235 (81%) felt the material was not so difficult. Of the remaining 46 student responses, only 15 (5%) found the material too difficult. Determining an “appropriate” text in terms of complexity is always difficult and the concern is that the material is not too difficult for the majority of the students. The 39 (14%) students who found the materials too easy I hope were at least interested, not bored by the material; it may be far easier to become bored with conversation practice or grammar exercises than a video.

11. Question # Two: “How often did you study the materials and listen to the tape?”

Figure 2

	A	B	C	D	E
1		Never	Once/Week	Twice/Week	Three/Week
2	GIDAI	50	104	10	6
3	NIIGATA	16	73	13	2
4	TOTAL	66	177	23	8



In Figure 2 what is interesting is that the 54 (19%) students in question number one who answered either that the materials were too difficult or too easy may be some of the same students 66 (24%) who in question number two said they “never” studied or listened to the tapes. The 177 (64%) who said they studied but once per week also reflects upon the

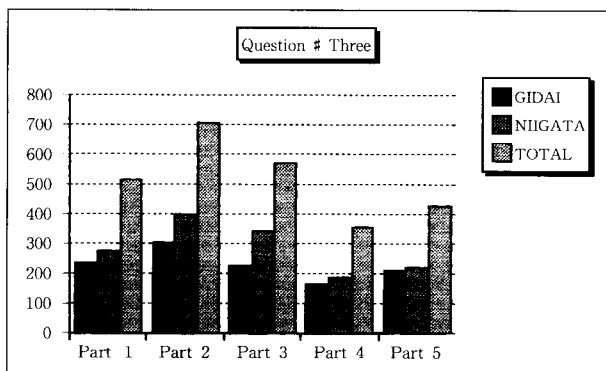
appropriateness of the text: is studying once a week indicative of materials that are, in fact, too easy?

12. Question # Three: "Which part of the exam was most difficult?"

Use 5 for most difficult, then 4,3,2, and 1 for the least difficult.

Figure 3

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Part 5
2	GIDAI	239	307	229	166	209
3	NIIGATA	279	398	346	190	221
4	TOTAL	518	705	575	356	430



The following is an explanation of the five parts of the exam: Part 1 is a listening section, either a dictation or answering an information question; part 2 is describing the action in a video frame which has been frozen on the screen; part 3 is a question—formation grammar activity; part 4 is a “true” — “false” and short answer comprehension section; and part 5 is a vocabulary cloze activity.

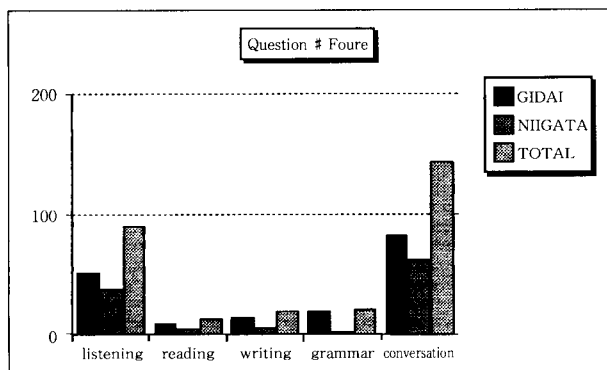
As is shown in Figure 3, the students at both universities found the level of difficulty in the exam pretty much the same regarding the different sections; moreover, there was a pretty equal distribution of rating among each of the sections. The most difficult for the students

was part 2 705 (23%), describing the action in a freeze-frame of the video. I thought that the distribution of scores would be much more weighted for the writing component the results yielded. It is pleasing that students felt able to write a quick description in class.

13. Question # Four: "If you could change our class, would you like more listening, reading, writing, grammar, or conversation?"

Figure 4

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		listening	reading	writing	grammar	conversation
2	GIDAI	52	9	14	19	83
3	NIIGATA	38	4	6	2	62
4	TOTAL	90	13	20	21	145



The trends found for Figure 4 are confounding on the one hand, expected on the other. Firstly, in our class we spent a good deal of the class listening to the recording of the video transcript and furthermore students were encouraged to listen to the tapes outside of class.

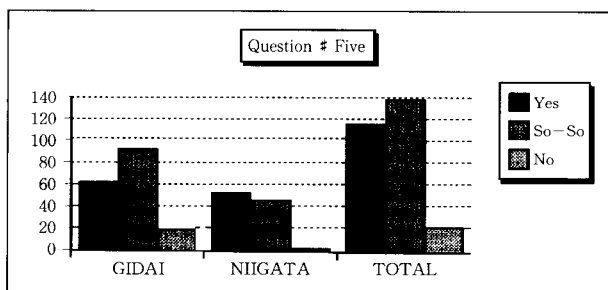
Therefore, it is puzzling when 90 (31%) said that they would like more listening! Is it possible to interpret their response by inferring that they would have liked to listen to the recording even more? Or,

would they rather have listened to other materials? Perhaps it is the case that aside from conversation, the students found the idea of increasing the amounts of reading, writing, and grammar unpalatable. Conversely, 145 (50%) of the students would like more conversation. This majority may be attributed to the fact that conversation is fun and does not require too much learning. However, most class sizes at Japanese national universities are very large (25–30 average), and many classrooms are designed with rows of seats bolted to the floor; as a result any moving around the class is difficult if not impossible for a teacher who wants to monitor students' conversation.

14. Question # 5: "Did you enjoy the video?"

Figure 5

	A	B	C	D
1		Yes	So-So	No
2	GIDAI	63	93	20
3	NIIGATA	54	47	3
4	TOTAL	117	140	23



For both questions 5 and 6, I wonder how much of the student response was influenced by the wording of the question to elicit positive choices? Still, as is indicated in Figure 5, it was surprising that a majority of students 140 (50%) answered that the video was only "so-so" in terms of being enjoyable.

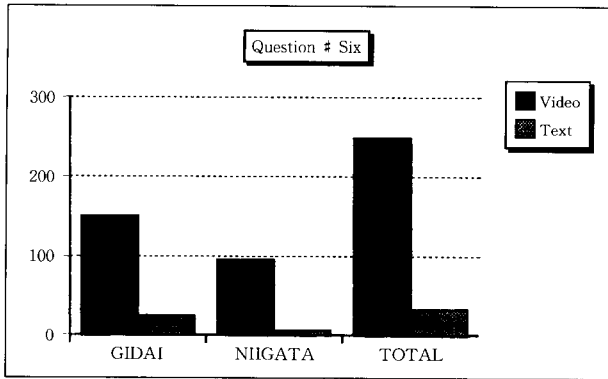
A possible explanation is the content of the videos. The GIDAI

(Nagaoka) students watched Japanese cultural videos and one nature video and as a group, their answers were more “negative” :combining the “so-so” and “no” answers for a total 113 (63%). The Niigata students watched either a nature video or in the case of medical—dental students (for 1996), a science video, and their combined tally and percentage for “so-so” and “no” was 50 (48%). A far higher percentage of Niigata students 54 (52%) answered “yes” to the question than did the Nagaoka students 63 (36%). Again, video content may have acted as the variable which explains these responses, and if that is the case, then it comes as a surprise. The nature videos are approximately 60 minutes in length, and the feeling was that some students might be bored; so, it was a pleasant discovery that the Japanese cultural videos were about half that in running time, around 30 minutes, so it was felt that students would not become so easily bored. In addition, it was felt that the cultural aspect of the videos about Japan would be more “relevant” and therefore somehow “deeper”. It was felt that the length of running time might account for various degrees of interest, but that was not the case. It appears that students enjoy videos, and the task is in determining which videos they will respond to most favorably.

15. Question # Six: “Would you rather use video materials as we did, or would you rather use a regular textbook?”

Figure 6

	A	B	C
1		Video	Text
2	GIDAI	152	25
3	NIIGATA	97	7
4	TOTAL	249	33



Again, this question may be worded so as to elicit favorable responses towards using video: perhaps the adjective “regular” is improper because it may paraphrastically mean, “the same old thing”. It is hoped the students attended vigilantly to the task of deciphering the question and answering honestly. The results as represented in Figure 6 indicate an overwhelming number of students (249, 88%) would rather use video materials.

16. Conclusion

A few words about teaching and teachers

In the section titled “**Two Popular Teaching Methodologies and Attendant Problems**”, it needs to be said that by no means are these the only two methodologies currently in use in Japan: they were simply two representative methods widely used, from my observations, at Japanese national universities. In that light they functioned as a sort of polemic from which to compare and contrast the third, the use of natural materials. In fact, it is doubtful if a teacher steadfastly sticks to one particular methodology; the feeling is that most do not. It should also be remembered that in American universities, a separate faculty for the teaching of English to speakers of other languages is a fairly recent addition—perhaps only 25 or 30 years

old. Before the need for a separate study of how to teach English to an influx of immigrant students, literature teachers undertook this task, were found to be inadequately prepared, hence the advent of TESOL. In Japan, while it is true that many faculty have special training in TESOL, many do not. Most literature majors who became university teachers fall into this category. Therefore it is often the case that the manner in which someone learned a foreign language, whether it was grammar—translation or the silent way—is that person's orientation to teaching EFL. It is natural. In Japan, as in America, literature teachers who teach EFL perhaps need some basic survey courses in methodology. (The need for grammar instruction is probably unnecessary, and myself feel that some of my colleagues understand English grammar much better than I, as some of my students understand grammar better than my nephews)

A few words about students and English

I often hear a faculty member complain that the students' level of English is "not good", and I often wonder about the faculty member's basis of comparison. Against 500+ TOEFL scores, the level at which many American universities admit students into content courses, the statement is true. In my experience, however, that compared with Spain or Yugoslavia, Japanese students, as well as the population as a whole, have a far better command of English.

A few words about the research

In the Fall of 1994 when I first sat down and thought about what the focus of my research might be, I wrote down a list of things which it would definitely not include. (You have to start someplace) I was not interested in comparing, for example, the examination scores or the final grades of students from both universities because student achievement in relation to both the natural materials and methodology

were not thought to be as important as student attitude: as a result, attitude, and not achievement have in some cases been compared but more importantly, it is the combined attitudes of students from both universities that seems to me to be key. It just might be a good research topic——looking at the correlation between the variable of TOEFL scores, exam results, or final grades, and attitudes——but it is outside the scope of this paper. Similarly, it is not always before but in the process of doing research that you realize the real issues and the important underlying assumptions of your research that unfortunately evaded your imagination at the onset. For instance, there should have been a design in the research which elicited statistically the way in which genre or the kind of video affects attitude and interest. What has been attempted within the scope of this paper has already been described in the introduction, and it is to be hoped that the results obtained have been collected and presented, as far as is possible, with objectivity, for the collective purpose of aiding in the teaching of foreign language in Japan.

Thanks are due to Aki Chikamatsu for his always—good cheer and willingness in translating the questionnaire from English to Japanese, Joey Fuentes for assisting in the computer graphic design, and also to Brad Blackstone for his “liquid” observations. Finally, I would like to thank the students at Nagaoka University of Technology and Niigata University for their cooperation in faithfully and honestly answering the student questionnaire.

Appendix 1

Japan: Tokyo and the Country

Part One

The heart of Japan beats with the _____, sound and shape of an ancient civilization. _____ is also a modern country with new _____ and sounds. Japan is a living mixture ____ old and new, harmony and tension.

_____ is the heart of Japan.

From dawn _____ late at night, this city moves fast. _____ is Tokyo, capital of Japan, a major _____ of the world, and a center of _____, economy, media, communications, culture, and a fast-living _____. One-third of Japan's entire population lives in _____ metropolitan area.

Many young people flood into _____ from the country. Tokyo has problems of _____, high land prices, and the world's highest _____ of commodities, which are 40% higher than _____ New York.

Why are so many people _____ in Tokyo?

If we can answer this _____, we may be able to understand Japanese _____, culture, and daily life.

Masato Aoki, a _____ year-old university senior in Tokyo, was born _____ lived in Aomori prefecture in northern Japan. _____ is now returning to his hometown for _____ first time in eighteen months. Many people _____ back to their country hometowns for about _____

week during the summer obon festival, and _____ at New Year's.

Obon is an ancient _____ that celebrates the return to this world _____ the family's dead ancestors. They return just _____ a year. At this time people visit _____ graves of their ancestors to say prayers _____ offer gifts to their souls. For one _____ in August, fifty million Japanese, half of _____ entire population, make this journey to the _____.

Appendix 2

Incredible Human Machine # One

Nouns

thought

My thoughts today aren't clear because I couldn't sleep last night
planet

How many planets are there, nine?

landscape

Japanese landscapes usually have large stones as important parts.

voyage

In the 19th century, explorers took long sea voyages to strange places
exploration

The most difficult but interesting of life's explorations is yourself.

self

How many selves do we have? Son or daughter, husband or wife, etc.

ancestors

My ancestors came from Germany, Ireland, and Norway.

paragon

Mt. Fuji is the paragon of all mountains in Japan.

cave wall

In Australia, archaeologists have discovered drawings on cave walls.

billboard

There are too many billboards advertising cigarettes, liquor, everything!
creation

When did creation first happen? One million years ago?

art

Do you think everyone has the ability to make art?

awe

When Japanese see Mt. Fuji for the first time they feel awe.

physiology

In my physiology class we had to dissect a big yellow cat! Oh God!

analysis

Scientists will have to give careful analysis to the Hanshin earthquake
in one sense

In one sense, I like Japan a lot; however, in another sense, I miss
the U.S.

all

Is that all the potatoes you cooked for dinner? I want some more!

Appendix 3

Part One Nouns

muscles a pair costumes harmony conservation contribution

1. Do you want to have _____ like Arnold Schwartznegger?
2. _____ means to live in peace.
3. I saw _____ of ducks swimming in the lake.
4. Land _____ is important for nature.
5. I hope we all can make a _____ to help other people.
6. On Halloween my sister and I used to dress in _____

Part Two Verbs

*to be after to struggle to worship to harm to divide
to describe to have time*

1. Do you _____ much free _____ to relax on weekends?
2. We _____ going up the mountain because it was not easy.
3. In religion, people alway _____ a god or goddess.
4. We need _____ this pizza into four parts.
5. What is your father like? Please _____ him to me.
6. There was a car crash but nobody was _____
7. The police _____ the pank robber.

Part Three Adverbs and Adjectives

drab rainy irreplaceable soft magnificent misty

1. It was a _____ day so we stayed inside and read.
2. The cat's fur is so _____!
3. On the top of the mountain the air is very _____
4. We drove to the beach to watch the _____ sunset.
5. I broke my grandfather's watch---it is _____!!!!!!
6. She was dressed in _____ clothing because she was working.

Appendix 4

FIRST, make a question for each of the half-sentences, 1--10.

SECOND, check your questions with a friend in class.

THIRD, ASK and ANSWER questions to **DIFFERENT STUDENTS**

IF a student answers "**YES**" then write his or her name in the _____

WORK ONE TO ONE, not in groups, O.K.?

EXAMPLE: *studies English on Saturday night.*

1. likes to eat seafood at a restaurant in Teradomari _____
2. is shorter than his or her father _____
3. has never visited Hokkaido _____

4. doesn't like to drink beer in summer _____
5. likes to go skiing in the winter _____
6. wants to be a professional sumo wrestler _____
7. doesn't like McDonald's fast food _____
8. is a fan of heavy metal music _____
9. never washes his or her car _____
10. Never drinks hot sake in winter _____

Appendix 5

Rain Forest Exam # FOUR

NAME IN ENGLISH

Part I Dictation. Listen to the sentence and write it.
(10 Points)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Part II Describe the action on the video. Use a lot of details
(21 Points)

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Part III Make two "follow-up" questions for each sentence.
(12 Points)

13. The indians wanted to live in harmony with nature, not conquer it
_____?

_____?

14. These insects and plants cannot survive in other places
_____?

_____?

15. We will be alive, but there will be no rain forests
_____?

_____?

16. Now it is a race against time.
_____?

_____?

**Part IV "True" or "False" or write a complete sentence
(12 Points)**

- _____ 17. The quetzal is thought to be the most beautiful bird
_____ 18. **Every hour 3 thousand acres of rain forest are destroyed**
_____ 19. The golden toads occupy an area no greater than 1 sq miles
_____ 20. Costa Rica has rain forests on both its coasts
_____ 21. Mayan and Aztec Indians lived in Costa Rica before whites

Write a complete sentence.

22. If a frog doesn't lay an egg into the water, what does the tadpole do?

23. What is one creature that ONLY lives in the forest canopy?

24. What percentage of rain forest in Costa Rica is protected?

Part V Use the words to complete the sentences (16 Points)

**generation crime conservation contribution to release
to respect to be described to realize to conserve
rare drab**

25. The Indians _____ all of natural life.
26. At the top of the mountain, a _____ kind of mating happens.
27. Their importance to nature's balance and their _____ will never be known.
28. Another _____ of golden toads will be produced.
29. Costa Rica has become a world leader in rain forest _____
30. Killing them was thought to be a _____
31. They fight for one of these _____ females.
32. They were simply caught and _____
33. But finally some countries are beginning _____ the problem.

34. If other nations _____ their rain forests, there is hope.
35. Many will become extinct before they _____ by science.

Appendix 6

This year I wanted to use different teaching materials in my classes, instead of a textbook, I decided to use my own materials. Now I need information from you, your opinion about the materials. Please do NOT write your name on this paper. Please be honest and think carefully about your answers. Be honest about the time you spent studying the materials especially. Thank you for your help

What is your opinion about the level of the materials?

Too Difficult Not Too Difficult Easy

How often did you study the materials and listen to the tape?

Never Once each week Twice each week

Three times each week 4 times each week 5 times each week

6 times each week More than 6 times (please write the number)

Which part of the exam was the most difficult for you?

Please use number 5 for the most difficult, then 4, then 3, then 2, finally 1 for the least difficult.

Part I Listen and Write the Sentence Part II Describe the video action

Part III Making questions Part IV True and False questions

Part V Vocabulary—write the word

If you could change our class, would you like more:

listening reading writing grammar conversation

Did you enjoy the video?

Yes

So—so

No

Would you rather use video materials as we did, or would you rather use a regular textbook?

Video

Text

Thank you very much for answering these questions; they will be very helpful for our English department.